

“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great JOY that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

SONG Silent Night

GOD’S WORD OF BLESSING

Numbers 6:24-26

L: Dear Friends, may the shepherds’ response to this Good News also be yours! God keeps His promises—tell everyone His Story! Return often to the Christ Child, revealed to you in His Word and Sacraments! Glorify and praise God in worship and in the world! And as you go: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

C: Amen!

✠ TO GOD ALONE ALL GLORY! ✠

*From our Shepherd Family to yours:
We wish you a Blessed CHRISTmas
and a Christ-filled New Year!*

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

Lord, lay some soul upon my heart and love that soul through me;
and may I gladly do my part to win that soul for Thee. Amen!

CONNECT CARDS Guests and members, please:

- ♦ fill out a Connect card, or
- ♦ scan the QR code to connect with us online

Cards are on clipboards at the end of a row. These methods include a space to share prayer requests with our pastors.

We look forward to praying for and connecting personally with YOU!



SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS
Lutheran Church & Early Learning Center
ShepherdHillsChurch.org



5 PM

December 24, 2025

CHRISTmas Eve



The custom of preparing the manger scene mirrors the act of Christians preparing their hearts for the arrival of Immanuel ~ God with us. On this night, we open our hearts to receive the gift of the Christ Child, born among us. On this first night of the Christmas season, we ourselves become the manger, inviting Christ to dwell within us just as He found rest in that Bethlehem stable.

To you this night is born a child.... He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below, that in His kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us His glory share.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, prepare a bed, soft, undefiled, a quiet chamber set apart for You to dwell within my heart. ~Martin Luther

✠ IN THE NAME OF JESUS ✠

LIGHTING OF THE WREATH CANDLES

Candles remind us Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, came to conquer sin’s darkness and to lead us into the light of His glorious Kingdom. The colors also have significance: blue is for hope; pink is for joy; white is for CHRISTmas morning: the purity of God, coming as the Christ Child. May God’s Spirit warm our hearts and homes as we celebrate the birth of Jesus! Joy to the world!

SONG MEDLEY Michael Amidei, Infinite Grace

Please refer to the screens for the song lyrics.

How Great Our Joy
Joy To The World
O Come All Ye Faithful
His Name Shall Be

INVOCATION Pastor Ben Oesch

Matthew 28:19b

Liturgist/Lector (L): We call on the name of the Triune God—the name into which we have been baptized: In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation (C): Amen!

CONFESSION OF SIN AND FORGIVENESS

FOR TO US
A SON IS GIVEN

SONG Noel

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 7:10-14

In Isaiah's prophecy, Jesus was God's miraculous answer to a fearful, unbelieving king. The Lord sent Isaiah to confront Ahaz and to call him to trust the Lord. Ahaz was a king in the family line of King David, which was also the family line of Jesus.

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask and I will not put the LORD to the test." And Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

EPISTLE READING 1 John 4:7-16

The Father sent His Son, Jesus, to be the propitiation—the sacrifice that would pay for our sins. He became our perfect substitute and assumed our debts. His sacrifice on the cross was sufficient to satisfy God's justice. What a gift God has given to us in Jesus!

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest [revealed] among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

GUESTS AND MEMBERS CONNECT *Please fill out the Connect Card, either by hand or with the QR code. Thank you!*

+ Children's Bulletins are available on the entrance table. +



OFFERING AND PRAYER *for giving options: ShepherdHillsChurch.org/Give*

SONG Hark The Herald Angels Sing

MESSAGE "This Is How God Showed Us His Love" text: 1 John 4:7-16

Pastor Brad Stoltenow



STATEMENT OF FAITH ~ THE APOSTLES' CREED

ALL: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen!

PRAYERS

In our December prayers, we Pray with an Open Heart for those who are lonely.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4

ALL: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen!

CANDLE LIGHTING *The lights are dimmed.*

HISTORY of CHRISTmas

from Chapter 2 of the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them,